

Appl. No. 10/600,487
Amendment dated May 15, 2006
Reply to Final Office Action of March 15, 2006

Remarks/Arguments

Claims 1-23 are pending and of these, claims 1-4, 7, 9-14, 16-20, and 22 stand rejected on varying grounds under §103(a) while claim 5-6, 8, 15, 21 and 23 are deemed to recite allowable subject matter.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of claims 4 and 5. Claim 6 and claim 8 have been rewritten in independent form to include the features of previous claim 1. Claim 12 has been amended to include the features of claim 15 and claim 17 has been amended to include the features of claim 21. Claims 4-5, 15 and 21 have been canceled. Claim 13, 14, 18, and 23 have been amended in view of one or more of the other amendments. No new matter has been added with any of these amendments

In view of the amendments to the claims and comments below, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner enter the amendments, reconsider the present application including claims 1-3, 6-14, 16-20, and 22-23 and withdraw the rejection of these claims.

The Examiner indicated in the March 15, 2006 Final Office Action that claims 5-6, 8, 15, 21 and 23 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 5 depends from claim 4, which depends from claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended to include the features of claim 4 and claim 5 and thus claim 1 should be allowable over the

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references of record. Claim 4 and 5 have been canceled. Claims 2-3, 7, and 9-11 depend from claim 1 and thus, at least by virtue of dependency, should likewise be allowable.

Claims 6 and 8 have been rewritten to incorporate all features of previous claim 1 and thus claims 6 and 8 should be allowable over the references of record.

Claim 12 has been amended to include the features of claim 15 and thus claim 12 should be allowable over the references of record. Claim 15 has been canceled. Claims 13 and 14 have been amended in view of the amendments to claim 12. Claims 13, 14, and 16 depend from claim 12 and thus, at least by virtue of dependency, should likewise be allowable.

Claim 17 has been amended to include the features of claim 21 and thus claim 17 should be allowable over the references of record. Claim 21 has been canceled. Claims 18 and 23 have been amended in view of the amendments to claim 17. Claims 18-20 and 22-23 depend from claim 17 and thus, at least by virtue of dependency, should likewise be allowable.

a) Claims 1-4, 9-13, 16-19 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baumann (US Patent 6,106,922) in combination with Matchett (US Patent 5,229,764).

In view of the above noted claim amendments and cancellations, Applicant respectfully submits that all rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based on Baumann (US Patent 6,106,922) in combination with Matchett (US Patent 5,229,764) have been either traversed or are now moot.

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b) Claims 7 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baumann (US Patent 6,106,922) and Matchett (US Patent 5,229,764) as applied above and further in view of Prokoski (US Patent 6,850,147).

In view of the above noted claim amendments, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claims 7 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based on Baumann (US Patent 6,106,922) and Matchett (US Patent 5,229,764) and further in view of Prokoski (US Patent 6,850,147) have been traversed.

c) Claim 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Baumann (US Patent 6,106,922) and Matchett (US Patent 5,229,764) as applied above and further in view of Maes (US Patent 6,016,476).

In view of the above noted claim amendments, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based on Baumann (US Patent 6,106,922) and Matchett (US Patent 5,229,764) and further in view of Maes (US Patent 6,016,476) has been traversed.


Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-3, 6-14, 16-20, and 22-23, as amended, clearly and patentably distinguish over the cited references of record and as such are to be deemed allowable. Such allowance is hereby earnestly and respectfully solicited at an early

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date. If the Examiner has any suggestions or comments or questions, calls are welcomed at the phone number below.

The Commissioner is authorized via the enclosed credit card authorization form to charge the fees for the additional independent claims 6 and 8 in the amount of \$400.00 to the indicated credit card. Although it is not anticipated that any other fees are due or payable, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-3435.

Respectfully submitted,


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